

Chapter 2 *Action Planning*

Module 6: Measuring Success

Step Up and Step Out to measure success!

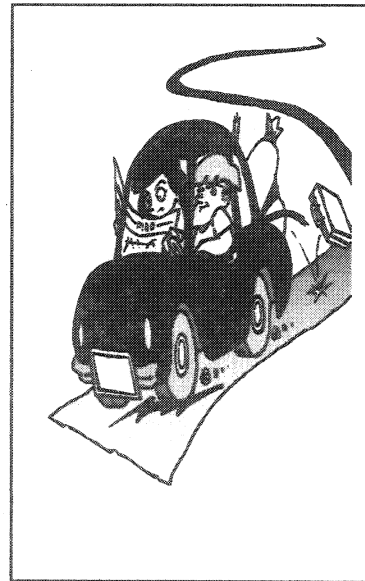
Each community has identified strengths and areas for development from a list of environmental factors provided in the community review. Individual goals have been created and actions planned. In other words, you have a “baseline” of where you are starting and a plan to create changes.

Now is the time to plan a way to determine progress so that success can be recognized and celebrated. Identify how you will measure success at this point.

Recognizing progress/success

Determining how to recognize success is like organizing a road map to plan a trip. Looking at your progress is important for many reasons including the following:

- 1. It shows where you started and where you are**
- 2. It provides feedback for future planning**
It gives you an opportunity to identify what worked and what didn't; and then to make changes.
- 3. It creates ownership**
When coalition members are able to play a role in determining future plans based on progress, it becomes personal for them.
- 4. It helps keep interest levels high**
With each small step completed, the success can be celebrated. Coalition members stay motivated if they are able to see progress in a relatively short period of time.
- 5. It helps to keep a focus on environmental changes**
Unreasonable expectations are more easily identified with continuous follow-up.



Examples:



Example 1: Setting goals that are easy to identify and celebrate when they are achieved will keep motivation high. Creating small steps to success increases the opportunities to celebrate! An example of that would be: A community that wants to raise funds for a new recreation building might create the following measures:

- Step a: Celebrate generating enough interest to begin a campaign
- Step b: Celebrate reaching one fourth of the funding goal, and
- Step c: Celebrate reaching one half of the funding goal, and so forth

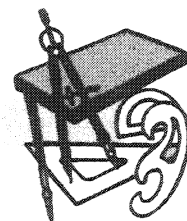
Example 2: A community's review revealed that there wasn't one business that was promoting healthy choices for employees. When the coalition identified **objectives**, members decided that increasing opportunities for healthy eating and activity choices at the work-site would be a part of the plan.

Actions included educating businesses about options for healthy choices, providing resources for making changes, and recognition of the businesses that made changes.

Measures of business changes included:

- a. Increasing healthy food choices in vending machines
- b. Providing employee wellness information
- c. Making time, equipment, or incentives available to increase physical activity

The coalition used the community review to track and report the actions planned for change and provide additional support. Every time actions were implemented, the coalition celebrated and congratulated the businesses involved!



Developing Measures for Success

If you have completed the steps suggested in this guidebook, you are ready to plan how to measure success. The progress review is based on the coalition's action plan and measures outcomes. Steps in the measurement process are common for all communities.

1. The initial community review

The initial community review provides a record of where you start so that your progress can be measured.



2. Periodic follow-up reviews

Follow-up reviews should be completed periodically to check progress. Quarterly reviews are recommended. Specify the progress review dates you determine in the coalition's action planning timeline. Also identify individuals responsible for designing, collecting and interpreting data at this time.

3. A review of coalition strength and building needs

It is also good to check the 'health' of the coalition.



- ♥ Is the coalition stronger or more fragmented?
- ♥ Are there good results from meetings?
- ♥ Is there good leadership?
- ♥ Are actions well facilitated?

4. A review of coalition actions



Check effectiveness of actions:

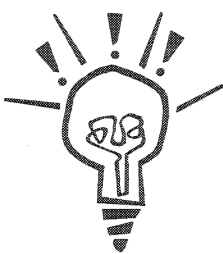
- ♥ Is the coalition using all of the environmental methods suggested for change: **policy, collaboration, repetition, education, support, and reward**?
- ♥ Do you have good marketing and awareness in the community? If not, does the coalition need to increase **collaboration**? Has the message been **repeated** often enough?
- ♥ Are there enough members involved to support the work, or enough people so that the work can be comfortably distributed? If not, is there continuous recruitment? Are coalition members **supported and rewarded**?
- ♥ How many different areas of the community are your actions reaching? If not all areas are reached, are there coalition members who represent each area of the community?
- ♥ Do your actions have the potential of impacting a relatively large number of community members? If not, are the actions you choose being prioritized appropriately?
- ♥ Are your actions being well received in the community? If not, is there a need for **education** or relationship building?

5. A final review following the investment of time and resources

- ♥ Did your initiative accomplish its action plan?
- ♥ Does the coalition desire to keep the action as is or enlarge its' scope?

6. Revision of strategies and actions as needed based on reviews

The progress review takes into account whether or not changes are required to meet the objectives of the action plan. If expected results have not been met, the action plan may need to be modified.



Module Tip:

Take time to measure progress. Determine where you are, where you want to be, how you want to get there, and in what time frame. Then identify the outcomes that show your progress. These are your measures.

FAQs:

- ❑ **Question:** Is it necessary to measure results from our initiative?
Answer: Yes. How else will your coalition establish its effectiveness unless a systematic collection of information occurs and is checked against desired results?
- ❑ **Question:** Does our information collection system need to be complex and scientific?
Answer: As with all the elements described within the initiative, make the system compatible with the action plan of your coalition and consistent with the level of personnel and resources available. It can be as simple or complex as you want it.

Module Glossary:

Measure: A necessary component of your initiative's action plan that will allow your coalition to collect information, interpret it, and measure results to monitor effectiveness.



Directions for Using the Community Review to Identify Measures

1. Use the community review completed in Module 2 as the starting point by which to measure changes.
2. Use the community review to check progress at intervals you determine. Quarterly is suggested.
3. Use the VMSOA Action Planning worksheets to provide the detail necessary for actions and measures the coalition will take. Include the details for how change will be measured on these worksheets.
4. An example is provided on the following page.



Example

Component: Community



Community Factors	Initial Status	Actions Planned	Results Demonstrated Specify # actions taken, changes, or comments
1. Businesses in the community promote healthy work-site choices with things such as healthy vending machine choices, wellness incentives, and wellness opportunities	<input type="checkbox"/> Strength <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Develop Date __6/05__	Initiate 10 work-site changes in the next year Contact vending companies for healthy options	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> In progress 12/05: 6 worksite changes identified 12/05: healthy options increased in 5 vending machines
2. Daycare centers are promoting healthy eating and physical activity choices	<input type="checkbox"/> Strength <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Develop Date __6/05__	Supply 5-A-Day ideas to receptive centers	<input type="checkbox"/> In progress 12/05: rap tapes and activity booklets provided to 5 daycare centers. Follow-up evaluation indicates they were used 15 times.
3. Community-based youth organizations and clubs provide age appropriate activities that promote and model healthy eating and physical choices	<input type="checkbox"/> Strength <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Develop Date __6/05__	Invite youth organization leaders to coalition meetings and planning sessions	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> In progress 12/05: 2 Boy scout/4-H leaders attending meetings and participating in planning sessions

Actions planned during the community review conducted on 6/05 are reviewed for progress (in far right column) on 12/05 and changes are indicated.